



Climate policy. IPCC lessons from Berlin

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Abstract:

In April in Berlin, governments approved the third of three reports comprising the fifth assessment report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). The report from Working Group 1 (WGI) made clear that human impact on climate change is almost certain. WGII showed that impacts of climate change are evident and poised to worsen. WGIII focused on how to mitigate the emissions that cause global warming. Although the underlying technical report from WGIII was accepted by the IPCC, final, heated negotiations among scientific authors and diplomats led to substantial deletion of figures and text from the influential "Summary for Policymakers" (SPM). The deleted content focused largely on historic emissions trends analyzed by country income groups and international cooperation. IPCC authors are instructed to be policy-relevant, without being policy-prescriptive, and the SPM is intended to balance governmental and scientific input. But some fear that this redaction of content marks an overstepping of political interests, raising questions about division of labor between scientists and policy-makers and the need for new strategies in assessing complex science. Others argue that SPM should explicitly be coproduced with governments. To promote discussion of whether and how to reform IPCC in advance of the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in November 2015, Science invited several WGIII members to share their perspectives on what happened in Berlin and what it means for the IPCC and climate policy.

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Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Policymaker, Researcher

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Unspecified Exposure

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Health Outcome Unspecified

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Policy/Opinion

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified